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TO: Dr. Joel Boyd, Superintendent of Schools

FROM: Liam Skinner, Chief Schools Officer

DATE: November 12, 2021

RE: *Response to Motion: Recess*

The following report is in response to a motion by Andre P. Descoteaux:

Request the administration review the adherence of our school Principals relating to the School Committee's strong support of recess NOT being used as a form of punishment.

At a meeting of all elementary and middle school principals held on Monday, November 1st, a review was conducted of how recess is used in schools. All principals voiced strong support for the School Committee's advice on recess. They asserted the value of recess for socialization and physical activity that supports both learning and general well-being. Principals claimed that recess for all students is prioritized on a daily basis.

Principals also stated that there are limited exceptions when recess is modified or denied. These occur primarily when a student endangers themselves or others during recess. The following examples of such exceptions were given:

- A student repeatedly running wildly during recess had recess modified so that it was held in a smaller space with less students
 - Recess being paused to teach students about safe behaviors
 - Recess being withheld at the request of a parent, including parent requests for recess detention in place of after school detention
 - Students having difficulty at recess being provided alternative recess options or 'selected choice'. For example, if a child is having difficulty returning from the recess field, they may be provided selected choices such as the basketball court or the playground
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